

REMARKS

1. Reconsideration and further prosecution of the above-identified application are respectfully requested in view of the amendments and discussion that follows. Claims 1-55 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 15, 19-20, 24 and 37 have been objected to for certain informalities. Claims 1-5, 8-24, 27-42 and 45-55 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,192,050 to Stovall in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,021,428 to Miloslavsky and U.S. Pat. No. 5,958,014 to Cave. Claims 6-7, 25-26 and 43-44 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Stovall in view of Miloslavsky and U.S. Patent No. 6,657,282 to Gerber et al. After a careful review of the claims (as amended), it has been concluded that the rejections are in error and the rejections are, therefore, traversed.
2. Claims 1, 15, 19-20, 24 and 37 have been objected to for certain informalities. In response, the informalities have been corrected as suggested by the Examiner.
3. Claims 1-5, 8-24, 27-42 and 45-55 have been rejected as being obvious over Stovall in view of Miloslavsky and Cave. In response, independent claims 1, 18, 19, 20 and 37 have been further limited to voice paths through the Internet and to providing the Internet user with a message requesting that the Internet user wait for the next available agent. Support for the display of the message may be found at page 10, lines 8-11 of the specification.

The use of a message to indicate that an agent is being selected would be recognized to be of significant

value to those of skill in the art because it provides an acknowledgement from the processing system that the request has been received and is being processed. This is different than prior art methods in a number of regards. For instance, agent availability would be understood to be independent of the operation of the web server and the user would likely be more tolerant of delay. Second, the use of a message provides a human element that is absent from most web pages.

Third, the availability of an agent is not a predictable event that can be shown with a bar chart or spinning globe. Further, the knowledge that a human helper will be with the user shortly would be comforting to a person frustrated by their inability to understand the complexity of a web site.

It is believed that Stovall, Miloslavsky and Cave fail to teach or suggest this claim limitation. Accordingly, The combination of Stovall, Miloslavsky and Cave can no longer be viewed as rendering the claimed invention obvious. Since the claimed invention can no longer be viewed as obvious, the rejection is believed to be improper and should be withdrawn.

4. Claims 6-7, 25-26 and 43-44 have been rejected as being obvious over Stovall in view of Cave, Miloslavsky and U.S. Pat. No. 5,657,383 to Gerber et al. However, a review of Gerber et al. reveals that Gerber et al. also fails to provide any teaching or suggestion of "providing the Internet user with a message requesting that the Internet user wait for the next available agent". As such, the combination of Stovall, Cave, Miloslavsky and Gerber et al. fails to teach each and every claim limitation. Since the

combination fails to teach each and every claim limitation, the rejection is believed to be improper and should be withdrawn.

4. Allowance of claims 1-55, as now presented, is believed to be in order and such action is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner be of the opinion that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of the subject application, he is respectfully requested to telephone applicant's undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,  
WELSH & KATZ, LTD.

By  
Jon P. Christensen

Registration No. 34,137

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WELSH & KATZ, LTD.  
120 South Riverside Plaza  
22nd Floor  
Chicago, Illinois 60606  
(312) 655-1500